

The Paraphrase of Erasmus of Ro terodame vpon the Seconde Epistle of John.

The elder to the electe lady and her children, whom I loue in the truth: and not I onely, The text
but also all that haue knowne the truth, for the truthe sake whiche dwelleth in vs and shall
be in vs for euer. With vs shall be grace, mercie, and peate from god the father, and from the
Lorde Iesus Christ the sonne of the father, in truth & loue. I reioyced greatly, that I founde
of thy children walkyng in truth, as we haue receaued a commaundment of the father. And
now beseeche I thee lady, not as though I wrote a newe commaundment vnto the, but that
same which we haue had from the begynninge, that we should loue one another. And this is the
loue, that we should walke after his commaundment. This commaundment is (that as ye haue
heard from the begynning) ye should walke in it. For many deceauers are entred into the world,
whiche confesse not that Iesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceauer and an Antichrist.
Take on your selues & we lose not that we haue wrought, but that we may haue a full reward.
Whoso euer transgresseth & bydeth not in the doctrine of Christ, hatheth not God. He that en-
dureth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the father & the sonne. If there come any vnto you,
& bring not this learning, him receaue not in house: nether bid him god speede. For he that byd-
eth him god speede, is partaker of his euil dedes. Behold, I haue tolde you before, & ye should
not be ashamed in the day of the Lorde. I had many thinges to write vnto you, neuertheless I
would not wyte with paper & ynke: but I trust to come vnto you, and speake with you mouth
to mouth, that our ioye maye be full. The sonnes of thy electe sister grete the. Amen.



John being an elder wyte vnto the electe lady, and to
her sonnes also, whome I loue sincerely, nether doe I
thus alone, but al that are with me which haue knowe
the truth of the Gospelle: nether doe they loue them
for any other cause, but that they vnderstande the syn-
ceritie of the Gospelles profession, which we folowe, to
remayne in vs, and shall remayne in vs for euermore.
Grace, mercie, and peace be alwayes encreased from
God the father, and from the Lorde Iesu Christe, vnto you that perseuer
still in the truth of the Gospelles doctrine, and in mutuell loue one to an
other. I was wonderfully glad, whan I perceaued that thy sonnes folow-
ing they mothers godlynes, contynued still in the truth of the Gospelles
doctrine, and not gaue herkenyng vnto false doctours, that goe about to
turne many awaye from it: where the father gaue vs thys in commaunde-
ment, that we shoulde geue care to the doctrine of hys sonne, and that we
shoulde not goe out of his fotesteppes. Therefore it is no nede nowe, ladye,
for me to instructe thy godlynes with newe commaundementes: only let vs
continue still in that, whiche was deliuered from the begynninge, that we
shoulde loue eche one other with a mutual and a true Christian loue. But
this beneuolence, the consent and all one facion of godly life amonge oure
selues must procure: that we may lyue in all one purposed studies after the
commaundment of God, whiche enjoined vs nothing so diligently, as mutu-
al loue amonge oure selues. There is no true loue amonge the wised, nor
amonge them that be of vnlike facions. Therefore I geue no newe commaun-
dement, but I geue you warnyng diligently, to continue still in that, which

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you haue already receaued longe a goe, and not to suffre youre selues by any subtilties of the false prophetes to be plucked awaye. For in dede there are manye deceauers in the worlde, whiche denye that Iesus is Chriute, whiche shoulde come into the worlde accordinge to the prophetes prophesies. He that teacheth thus, is a deceauer, and Antichriute him self, Chriutes aduersarie. Let every one take hede to hym selfe, leste if he forsake that whiche he hathe well begonne, he lose all the frute of those thinges, whiche he hathe hitherto done well: but let vs geue diligence, that we may receaue the full hyze, which happeneth not, but to them that perseuer still vnto the ende. Who soeuer swaruerth from the trueth, and abyderth not still in the doctrine of Chriute, he is estraunged also from God the father, in that he swarued from the sonne. But he that constauntly foloweth his doctrine, is in his so doinge, dearely beloued both vnto the father and to the sonne. The one canne neyther be had nor forsaken, without the other. Thys is the true doctrine, whiche you haue receaued of true recorde bearours from the begynnyng. But if any man come vnto you, and bringeth a contrary doctrine to this, to carye you away from the Gospelles veritie, you ought not onely to take no hede vnto him, but also he ought not so muche as be admitted in to your house if he desyre lodging: nor to be bidden, Godspede, if he chaunce to mete you in the way. For it is daunger lest he infecte the household with his familiaritie: and for hys ledging, requite an euill turne: and lest of bidding him Godspede, there arise communicacion. And in dede euil communicacion corrupteth good maners. To be shorthe, he that salureth and kepeth company with such a matter deceauour, he cometh to be a companyon of his euill dooinges. For he geueth a conrage vnto the wicked, whan he seeth him selfe any whit regarded with them, whom he goeth about to subuerte: and geueth an outwarde shewe of euill vnto other, as though he seemed to fauour the naughtynes of hym, whose familiaritie he doeth not abhorre. There were many other thinges, whiche I was desyrous to wyte vnto you concerning these matters; howbeit I had rather open them to you presently, than to put them in wytyng: for I truste shortly to come see you and talke with you presently mouth to mouth, that the Joy, whiche I haue conceaued of youre constaunt sinceritie, maye bee more pleynteous and full, whan I shall bothe presently see in you, that which now beinge absen^t I heare of you: and you againe shall see with your eyes the loue that I beare towarde you.

Thy nephewes, thy sisters sonnes,
whiche is a christian woman
commend them vnto the.

(†)

Thende of the seconde epistle of
John.